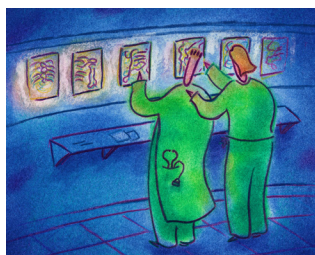


Golden Hills

Orthopedic and Sports Physical Therapy

september 2006

n e w s



Our Mission...

To further the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of movement dysfunction in order to enhance the physical health and functional abilities of our patients.

To maximize the patient's potential for regaining full physical health by providing rehabilitation through the use of advancements in physical therapy techniques and state-of-the-art equipment.

To establish a self-management program for the patient through education and a personalized home exercise program for each individual to enable the patient to maintain their physical health at home and at work.

Physical Therapy for Shoulder Injuries

Golden Hills specializes in treating shoulder injuries in athletes, children and the elderly. Call us for more information!
(408) 274-0888

Preventing and Treating Injuries to the Shoulder

The August issue of *Golden Hills News* was the first in a special two-issue series on the prevention and treatment of shoulder injuries. In August, we focused on shoulder anatomy and highlighted the most common types of shoulder injuries. This month, we delve into more detail about each shoulder injury condition and provide helpful insights into our approach to improving patient recovery through physical therapy.

Shoulder Injury Conditions

Dislocation

The glenohumeral (GH) joint is the most frequently dislocated major joint of the body. In a typical case of a dislocated shoulder, a strong force that pulls the shoulder outward (abduction) or extreme rotation of the joint pops the ball of the humerus out of the socket.

Signs and Diagnosis

The shoulder can dislocate forward, backward or downward. Not only does the arm appear out of position when the shoulder dislocates, but the dislocation also produces pain. Swelling, numbness, and bruising are likely to develop.

Physical Therapy Treatment

After the patient has rested the shoulder by wearing a sling, Golden Hills treats the injury with a range of motion (ROM) and strength training exercise program to assist the patient in regaining his or her full strength and range of motion. Exercises to improve

stabilization and functional mobility of the glenohumeral joint are incorporated with synchronized shoulder girdle movement pattern training.

Separation

A shoulder separation occurs where the collarbone meets the shoulder blade. When ligaments that hold the acromioclavicular (AC) joint together are partially or completely torn, the outer end of the clavicle may slip out of place, preventing it from properly meeting the scapula.

Signs and Diagnosis

Shoulder pain or tenderness and, occasionally, a bump in the middle of the top of the shoulder are signs that a separation may have occurred.

Physical Therapy Treatment

After the patient has rested the shoulder by wearing a sling and has used ice to relieve pain and swelling, Golden Hills treats the injury with a ROM exercise program to assist the patient in regaining his or her full range of motion. We also perform shoulder girdle stabilization training, functional mobility training and training specific to the patient's applicable sport activities.

Tendonitis, Bursitis and Impingement Syndrome

These three conditions are closely related and may occur alone or in combination. If the rotator cuff and

Preventing and Treating Shoulder Injuries (Continued)

bursa are irritated, inflamed or swollen, they may become squeezed between the head of the humerus and the acromion. Repeated motion involving the arms, or the aging process, may also irritate and wear down the tendons, muscles and surrounding structures

In tendonitis of the shoulder, the rotator cuff and/or biceps tendon become inflamed. The injury may vary from mild inflammation to involvement of most of the rotator cuff. When the rotator cuff tendon becomes inflamed and thickened, it may get trapped under the acromion. Squeezing of the rotator cuff is called impingement syndrome. Tendonitis and impingement syndrome are often accompanied by inflammation of the bursa sacs. An inflamed bursa is called bursitis.

Signs and Diagnosis

Signs of these conditions include the slow onset of discomfort and pain in the upper shoulder or upper third of the arm. Tendonitis and bursitis also cause pain when the arm is lifted away from the body or overhead. If tendonitis involves the biceps tendon, pain will occur in the front or side of the shoulder and may travel down the arm.

Diagnosis of tendonitis and bursitis begins with a medical history and physical examination. X-rays do not show tendons or the bursae but may be helpful in ruling out bony abnormalities or arthritis. Impingement syndrome may be confirmed when injection of a small amount of anesthetic into the space under the acromion relieves the pain.

Physical Therapy Treatment

At Golden Hills, we begin with a comprehensive evaluation and treat the injury with anti-inflammatory modalities such as ice, EMS, iontophoresis and TENS. We

gradually add gentle stretching and strengthening exercises, neuro modulation and movement pattern reeducation, and progress the patient as he or she responds to treatment.

Fracture

A fracture involves a partial or total crack through a bone. The break in a bone usually occurs as a result of an impact injury, such as a fall or blow to the shoulder. A shoulder fracture usually involves the clavicle or the neck of the humerus.

Signs and Diagnosis

A shoulder fracture that occurs after a major injury is usually accompanied by severe pain. Within a short time, there may be redness and bruising around the injured area. Sometimes a fracture is obvious because the bones appear out of position. Both diagnosis and severity can be confirmed by x-ray.

Physical Therapy Treatment

At Golden Hills, we begin with a comprehensive evaluation and then treat the injury with gentle ROM and strengthening exercise, as well as functional reaching activities to prevent adhesive capsulitis and loss of function.

Rotator Cuff Tear

The term “rotator cuff” refers to a group of four tendons that attach to the upper end of the humerus. These tendons transmit the force of the shoulder muscles, providing stability. Defects in the rotator cuff can come from an injury (cuff tear) or from degeneration (cuff wear). Degenerated tendons are often frail and retracted and may not be amenable to repair.

Signs and Diagnosis

Rotator cuff injury results in the patient having difficulty lifting the

arm. Repair of the rotator cuff requires that the tendon be securely anchored to the bone at surgery and that the repair be protected for several months during healing.

Physical Therapy Treatment

For nonsurgical patients, Golden Hills begins with a comprehensive evaluation and then treats the injury with strength, flexibility and stability training. For surgical repairs, we begin with a comprehensive evaluation and then treat the injury with passive ROM for 4-6 weeks post-op. Then we begin active strength, flexibility and functional mobility training.

Arthritis

In arthritis of the shoulder, the cartilage of the glenohumeral joint is lost so that bone rubs on bone.

Signs and diagnosis

Arthritis of the shoulder causes pain and loss of motion and use of the shoulder. X-ray of the shoulder shows loss of the normal space between the ball and socket.

Physical Therapy Treatment

At Golden Hills, we begin with a comprehensive evaluation and treat the injury with anti-inflammatory modalities, pain management such as TENS, ultrasound, heat/ice and myofascial release, and ROM nonloading exercises.

Physical therapy plays a critical role in any patient’s recovery from a shoulder injury. Golden Hills provides thorough evaluation and treatment to the shoulder girdle and trunk. We also help correct muscle imbalance and faulty posture and use neuro modulation techniques to reeducate movement patterns. Contact us today for more information: **(408) 274-0888**.